

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 EA-07 IO-13 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 AID-05
OMB-01 TRSE-00 DHA-02 EB-07 FEAE-00 COME-00 /111 W
-----114118 191323Z /41

P R 191215Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2920
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMCONSUL LAHORE
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 7360

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PK
SUBJECT: POLITICAL SITUATION: BHUTTO IS CAUTIOUS AND ANTI-AMERICAN
THEME REEMERGES

REF: ISLAMABAD 7272

1. ADDRESSING PPP SUPPORTERS IN MURREE ON JULY 18, FORMER
PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO BACKED OFF FROM EARLIER REPORTS HE
WOULD DEFINITELY CONTEST THE ELECTIONS AND SAID THAT WHAT-
EVER DECISION HE TAKES WILL BE IN THE SUPREME INTEREST
OF THE NATION. ACCORDING TO THE PAKISTAN TIMES (JULY 19),
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BHUTTO DELCLARED THAT HE WOULD TOUR THE COUNTRY AS SOON AS
HE IS RELEASED AND CONSULT WITH HIS PARTY MEMBERS. HE
SAID THAT HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN GUIDED BY THE IDEAL OF
SERVING THE MASSES AND HAS NO LUST FOR POWER. HE DENIED
THAT THE ARMY TAKE-OVER WAS DONE WITH HIS APPROVAL,
CLAIMING THAT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO TOLERATE
SUCH A THING AS THE ELECTED AND CONSTITUTIONAL PRIME

MINISTER OF THE COUNTRY. REVERTING TO THE ANTI-AMERICAN THEME, BHUTTO ASSERTED THAT THE FACTS ABOUT THE CONSPIRACY HATCHED AGAINST PAKISTAN WOULD SOON BE REVEALED TO THE PEOPLE AND VOWED THAT THE PPP WOULD DEFEAT THE EXPLOITERS AND IMPERIALISTS IF IT PARTICIPATED IN THE ELECTION.

2. IN A FRONTPAGE STORY THE SAME DAY QUOTING THE PPP OFFICIAL ORGAN MUSAWAAT, THE PAK TIMES REPORTED AN ANNOUNCEMENT THAT BHUTTO HAD MADE TO PPP WORKERS IN MURREE ON JULY 17 REGARDING THE DISCOVERY OF LARGE-SCALE OIL AND GAS RESERVES, REPORTED SEPTEL, AT PIRKOH IN BALUCHISTAN JUST BEFORE HE WAS ARRESTED. (THERE WAS NO OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION.) ACCORDING TO THE STORY, AMOCO HAD PREVIOUSLY DRILLED IN THE SAME AREA, BUT DID NOT GO DEEP ENOUGH, PROOF THAT "CERTAIN INTERESTED POWERS DID NOT WANT PAKISTAN TO BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT IN OIL." IN AN ARTICLE ON THE EDITORIAL PAGE OF MUSAWAAT ON JULY 18 MAHMOOD SHAM, A KARACHI JOURNALIST, CLAIMED BHUTTO WAS A VICTIM OF CIA. ACCORDING TO SHAM, BHUTTO'S FIRST REMARK UPON LEARNING THAT THE TROOPS HAD COME TO TAKE HIM AWAY WAS "THE CIA HAS SUCCEEDED." THE ARTICLE CONCLUDED THAT BHUTTO WOULD DEFEAT THE US-ZIONIST LOBBY, GET THE REPROCESSING PLANT AND REVOLUTIONIZE PAKISTAN AFTER A BRILLIANT RETURN TO POWER.

3. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, PNA LEADERS MET WITH
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OPPOSITION WORKERS ON JULY 18 IN MURREE TO MAP OUT THEIR ELECTION STRATEGY. PROFESSOR GHAFOR REPORTEDLY SAID THAT HE HAS MADE IT CLEAR TO THE MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATION (MLA) THAT BHUTTO SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO RUN. ASKED BY NEWSMEN FOR HIS OPINION, AIR MARSHAL ASGHAR KHAN AGREED THAT BHUTTO SHOULD HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONTEST THE ELECTION, BUT SAID HE THOUGHT HE MIGHT NOT DO SO BECAUSE (1) BHUTTO WOULD BE APPROVING THE ARMY TAKE-OVER IF HE TOOK PART IN THE POLLS, AND (2) HE MAY HAVE TROUBLE FACING THE PEOPLE. HOWEVER, ASGHAR SAID HE HOPED BHUTTO WOULD NOT SHRINK FROM THE CONTEST. NAWABZADA NASRULLAH KHAN, THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE PNA, ASSERTED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO RIFT IN THE PNA WHETHER BHUTTO ENTERED THE POLLS OR NOT. PNA PRESIDENT MUFTI MAHMUD VOICED A SIMILAR OPINION, CLAIMING THE PNA WILL REMAIN UNITED FOR THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN.

4. IN A RELATED DEVELOPMENT, NAWA-I-WAQT REPORTED ON JULY 19 THAT THE MLA HAS DECIDED TO HOLD ELECTIONS EVEN IF ONE OR MORE PARTIES BOYCOTTS. BHUTTO, MEANWHILE HAS REPORTEDLY PRESENTED THE MLA WITH TWO DEMANDS WHICH HE INSISTS BE GRANTED BEFORE HE WILL ENTER THE

POLLS. A RELIABLE SOURCE HAS REPORTED THAT ONE OF BHUTTO'S DEMANDS IS THAT NO CASES BE BROUGHT AGAINST HIM OR OTHER PPP LEADERS, EVEN THOUGH ZIA HAS ALREADY ANNOUNCED THAT NO POLITICAL FIGURES WILL BE TRIED. ANOTHER CONSIDERATION FOR BHUTTO, ACCORDING TO THE SOURCE, IS THE MLA'S ORDER THAT NO CRITICISM OF THE MILITARY REGIME WILL BE PERMITTED DURING THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN.

5. THERE HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLE PRESS SPECULATION DURING THE PAST TWO DAYS THAT THE MLA MAY RELEASE ALL POLITICAL LEADERS IN THE NEXT NINETY-SIX HOURS. HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT TO THIS EFFECT AND SUCH A STEP WOULD BE CONTRARY TO ZIA'S STATE-CONFIDENTIAL

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MENT THAT THE LEADERS HAVE TO SIGN A CODE OF ETHICS (SHICH REPORTEDLY WILL NOT BE FINISHED IN THE NEXT SEVERAL DAYS) BEFORE THEY ARE RELEASED. ACCORDING TO THE RADIO NEWS AT 1500 HOURS ON JULY 19, THE MLA HAS SUSPENDED ALL VISITORS PRIVILEGES FOR THE INTERNED POLITICAL LEADERS IN MURREE. THIS DECISION WAS APPARENTLY TAKEN AFTER SUPPORTERS OF BOTH SIDES CHANTED SLOGANS IN MURREE YESTERDAY.
HUMMELL

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